GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4342
ANSWERED ON:17.12.2002
BIO-TECH SECTOR
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Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is emerging as potential leading player in the Bio-Tech sector in the Asia Pacific Region;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to promote this sector;

(c) whether the Government have consulted the States for better co-ordination in identifying the areas of export potential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a): India is emerging in the Asia-Pacific Region alongwith China, Singapore and Australia as a potential leading player in Biotechnology.

(b): Government of India has made concerted efforts to promote research and development, application and commercialization of research leads in biotechnology. The areas covered are agriculture, healthcare including vaccines ,environment and biotech industry. From Rs. 622 crore in Ninth Plan (1997-2002), allocation has gone upto Rs. 1450 crore for the Tenth Plan (2002-07). Establishment of 62 bioinformatics centers, 25 state-of-the-art biotech facilities, Centers of Excellence and 64 postgraduate teaching programmes, establishment of a National Bioresource Development Board, new institutions like National Brain Research Centre, National Centre for Plant Genome Research and Institute of Bioresource and Sustainable Development in addition to many other national laboratories in frontier areas of biology and biotechnology have further accelerated the progress.

Various incentives have been given to the biotech industry through fiscal measures, custom and excise duty exemptions, tax holidays for R&D expenditure, encouraging Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), speedy clearance of FDI projects by Foreign Investmen Promotion Board (FIPB), constitution of Fast Track Committee (FTC) under Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) etc. To inculcate biotech industry in small-scale sector, a Task Force and a Biotechnology Cell have been created in the Ministry of Small Scale Industries, Agro and Rural Industries.

(c) & (d) : Continuing dialogue is on with many State Governmentsto promote biotech application and commercialization . The thrust is on identifying location specific problems for enhancing the export potential of agriculture and health sectors through biotechnology interventions. For this, setting up of biotech parks, incubators and some pilot projects are under discussion.